

# APE

ANIMAL PROTECTION  
EDUCATION

## Animals:

# Property or persons?

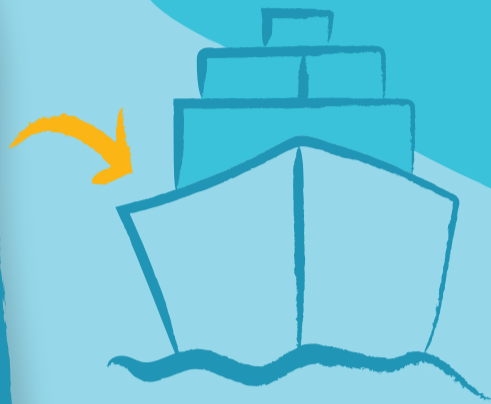


Under the law animals are *human property*

Property is a *thing* owned by a *legal person*

Things do not have *legal rights*

Some people argue that *animals* should have rights



Rivers, corporations and ships can be legal persons. This means they have certain legal rights. What about animals?

Some lawyers in the US argue that animals, like chimpanzees and elephants, should have basic *rights* protected under the law.

To do this, they have to prove that Tommy is a **legal person** and not **human property**.



They are trying to convince the court to free Tommy from the caravan park, so he can lead a more *natural* life in an animal sanctuary.

One of their clients is a chimpanzee called *Tommy* who lives in a cage in a caravan park.

They argue that chimpanzees have certain capacities (such as *autonomy* and *self-awareness*) that entitle them to **legal personhood**.

For example, chimpanzees have *language* and *culture*, and can plan for the

## future

The courts in the US have ruled that Tommy is a *thing* and not a *legal person*. However, one judge said that chimpanzees are not just "*things*"



## What do you think?



### Question

whether animals should be considered human property under the law.



### Consider

the different views on this issue, and decide for yourself where you stand.



### Discuss

with your friends, family, classmates and teachers. Debating complex issues is healthy and helpful.